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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXXVIII—No. 12 **October, 1950**

THE *Theosophical Society was intended to stem the current of materialism, and also that of spiritualistic phenomenalism and the worship of the Dead. It had to guide the spiritual awakening that has now begun, and not to pander to psychic cravings which are but another form of materialism. For by "materialism" is meant not only an anti-philosophical negation of pure spirit, and, even more, materialism in conduct and action—brutality, hypocrisy, and, above all, selfishness,—but also the fruits of a disbelief in all but material things. . . . The essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his god-like qualities and aspirations.*

—H.P.B.

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$3.50 per Annum *35 Cents per Copy*

Edited and Published by

THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

245 West 33rd Street, Los Angeles (7), California, U.S.A.

Publisher's Announcements

THEOSOPHY: Established November, 1912, by Robert Crosbie. Published monthly by the Theosophy Company, at Los Angeles, California, U. S. A. This Magazine is an independent Journal, unconnected with any theosophical society or other organization. The Publishers assume full responsibility for all unsigned articles herein.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: No subscriptions are accepted for less than one year of 12 numbers, but subscriptions may begin with any desired number. All subscriptions, orders for single back numbers, and back volumes, bound or unbound, should be accompanied by the necessary remittance. Price $3.50 per annum; single numbers of the current volume, 35 cents each; back numbers, 50 cents each; back volumes, unbound, $5.00 each; for library style binding, prices on request. *Volumes I and XII are out of print.*

COMMUNICATIONS: Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten double-spaced on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, and copies should be in all cases retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters from subscribers and readers are welcomed, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the magazine. Questions on Theosophical Philosophy and History will be replied to direct, or, if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of the magazine.

BEQUESTS AND DONATIONS: Gifts and legacies will be gladly received from those in sympathy with the objects of this Magazine when such benefactions are unencumbered and unrestricted. Donors should make their gifts to

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A U M

Universal Brotherhood is the union of diverse elements in one complete whole. Marttanda, the mighty light of men, withholds no rays from the good or the evil, and why should man, who fades from view before Surya has revolved one cycle, keep back his love and help from any creature whatsoever? —*Old Hindu Book*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVIII **October, 1950** **No. 12**

"AMPLE ROOM FOR FREEDOM"

IN the last four years of her life, H. P. Blavatsky had occasion to set down some brief but explicit directions for theosophists who were determined to follow the path she showed in working for the theosophical cause. To the American theosophists in convention, during the years from 1888 to 1891, H.P.B. addressed five messages dealing with the principles that govern theosophical effort. The result is a series of documents remarkable in many ways, not the least of which is their entire departure from anything that may be construed as the organizational spirit. It is immediately evident, to one who reads the *Five Messages* carefully, that no attempt was made to manufacture "success" or prestige out of red tape and majority votes.

From what is usually termed a practical point of view, the goal set in the first message is utterly unattainable, for H. P. Blavatsky described "an organization which, while promoting feelings of fraternal sympathy, social unity, and solidarity, will leave ample room for individual freedom and exertion in the common cause—that of helping mankind." But what body of men and women, if specially united for the purpose, could promote fraternity, unity, and solidarity, except among themselves? The very formation of their order would emphasize their separateness from other groups and individuals. And how can "ample room for individual freedom and

exertion" be allowed if members are expected to *associate* with even a few, let alone many co-workers? The student is forced to conclude that his teacher is about her characteristic business of re-defining terms, reviving lost arts, cutting away the dead tissue of conventional and materialized conceptions, and bringing to view forgotten ideals from which social forms and superstitions take what life they have, while the living source is ignored and finally denied.

Is it consistent with the myth of organization for H.P.B. to speak first and only of the "multiplication of local centres" and then to further narrow the field by counselling that "each man should strive to be a centre of work in himself"? Theories of the power of organization usually derive from the power of "numbers," whereas theosophical influence is apparently to be considered in terms of units and small centers. In addition, the center is not to be formed, arranged, or "duly constituted" by the organization itself. "When his inner development has reached a certain point," H.P.B. continues, speaking of the member who seeks to become himself a center, "he will naturally draw those with whom he is in contact under the same influence; a nucleus will be formed, round which other people will gather, forming a centre from which information and spiritual influence radiate, and towards which higher influences are directed." The nature of the various "influences" is unspecified, as is the "certain point" when one center becomes a focus for others. These are *natural* events, not covered by official directives or by-laws, and they come about as silently as growth itself and as surely—for those who find in Theosophy the outline of a necessary "inner development."

Another distinct divergence from the usual pattern of organization is found in H. P. Blavatsky's declaration that "The Founders of the Society wish every Section—as soon as it becomes strong enough to govern itself—to be as independent as is compatible with its allegiance to the Society as a whole and to the Great Ideal of Brotherhood, the lowest formal grade of which is represented by the Theosophical Society." The complete application of this principle brings us back full circle to the original emphasis on individual freedom and exertion as constituting the fundamental center of work, and outlaws the common delusion that efficiency depends upon passively coordinated masses, "moved" by authority. Unity, strength,

and spiritual influence derive, in the program of the Theosophical Movement, as in human life and evolution, from self-induced and self-devised exertions, checked by knowledge of karma—the law of equilibrium—and by allegiance to the ideal of universal brotherhood.

But knowledge of karma comes slowly, and will not be perfect until human evolution is complete. Universal brotherhood is progressively realized, step by step, in an almost infinite series. Is there any better evidence that theosophical activity can never proceed automatically, but must be eternally checked and verified by theosophical principles, and by each one who chooses to be a center of unity, study, and work? H.P.B.'s messages to the American Theosophical Conventions individualized the units present by directing attention to the philosophical integrity each one must someday establish in himself. At the same time her messages extended among all the spirit of solidarity that coheres the brotherhoods in nature. In the present cycle, and Conventions aside, her messages have the same function, and theosophists—wherever and however situated—can discover in them the finer type of individual freedom and exertion, together with the broader scope of tolerance, that the messenger of Theosophy envisioned.

Fundamental Principles

Either Theosophy pure and undefiled is the most real thing in the world, or we are all wasting our time and effort. If we are able to conceive its reality in all seriousness, we should then never cease trying to understand and apply what has been recorded by Masters' Messenger for our guidance and instruction. What is the distinction between Theosophy and anything else? In Fundamental Principles, I should say. Nothing else affords an all-inclusive view of existence. All kinds of sincere efforts help, all kinds of systems contain some truth, but they all fall short, because they all exclude or ignore some part of nature. Theosophists of every degree should realize that under Karma much is required of those to whom much has been given in opportunity and knowledge. We can only use our opportunities and knowledge to the best possible advantage and continue to do so, if we would not ourselves fall short of the requirement of "the Law of Laws—Compassion absolute." —R. C.

CLASSIFICATION OF "PRINCIPLES"

IN a most admirable lecture by Mr. T. Subba Row on the *Bhagavad Gita,* published in the February number of the *Theosophist,* the lecturer deals, incidentally as I believe, with the question of septenary "principles" in the Kosmos and Man. The division is rather criticized, and the grouping hitherto adopted and favoured in theosophical teachings is resolved into one of *Four.*

This criticism has already given rise to some misunderstanding, and it is argued by some that it is a slur thrown on the original teachings. This *apparent* disagreement with one whose views are rightly held as almost decisive on occult matters in our Society is certainly a dangerous handle to give to opponents who are ever on the alert to detect and blazon forth contradictions and inconsistencies in our philosophy. Hence I feel it my duty to show that there is in reality *no* inconsistency between Mr. Subba Row's views and our own in the question of the septenary division; and to show *(a)* that the lecturer was perfectly well acquainted with the septenary division before he joined the Theosophical Society; *(b)* that he knew it was the teaching of old "Aryan philosophers who have associated seven occult powers with the seven principles" in the Macrocosm and the Microcosm (see the end of this article); and *(c)* that from the beginning he had objected—not to the classification but to the form in which it was expressed. Therefore, now, when he calls the division "unscientific and misleading," and adds that "this sevenfold classification is almost conspicuous by its absence in *many* (not all?) of our Hindu books," etc., and that it is better to adopt the time-honoured classification of four principles, Mr. Subba Row must mean only some special orthodox books, as it would be impossible for him to contradict himself in such a conspicuous way.

A few words of explanation, therefore, will not be altogether out of place. For the matter of being "conspicuous by its absence" in Hindu books, the said classification is as conspicuous by its absence in Buddhist books. This, for a reason transparently clear: it was

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NOTE.—This article by H. P. Blavatsky appeared in *The Theosophist,* April, 1887, with reference to a passage in Subba Row's lecture (see THEOSOPHY for July.) —**Eds. THEOSOPHY.**

always esoteric; and as such, rather inferred than openly taught. That it is "misleading" is also perfectly true; for the great feature of the day—materialism—has led the minds of our Western theosophists into the prevalent habit of viewing the seven principles as distinct and self-existing *entities,* instead of what they are—namely, *upadhis* and correlating states—three *upadhis,* basic groups, and four principles. As to being "unscientific," the term can be only attributed to a *lapsus linguae,* and in this relation let me quote what Mr. Subba Row wrote about a year *before he joined* the Theosophical Society in one of his ablest articles, "Brahmanism on the Seven-fold principles in Man," the best review that ever appeared of the Fragments of Occult Truth—since embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism.* Says the author:—

"I have carefully examined it (the teaching) and find that the results arrived at (in the Buddhist doctrine) do not differ much from the conclusions of our Aryan philosophy, though our mode of stating the arguments may differ in form." Having enumerated, after this, the "three primary causes" which bring the human being into existence—*i.e.,* Parabrahmam, Sakti and Prakriti—he explains: "Now, according to the Adepts of ancient Aryavarta, *seven principles* are evolved out of these three primary entities. Algebra teaches us that the number of *combinations* of things, taken *one* at a time, *two* at a time, *three* at a time, and so forth $= 2^n - 1$. Applying this formula to the present case, the number of entities evolved from different combinations of these three primary causes amount to $2^3 - 1 = 8 - 1 = 7$. As a general rule, whenever seven entities are mentioned in the ancient occult sciences of India in any connection whatsoever, you must suppose that these seven entities come into existence from the three primary entities; and that these three entities, again, are evolved out of a single entity or MONAD." (See *Five Years of Theosophy,* p. 160.)

This is quite correct, from the occult standpoint, and also kabbalistically, when one looks into the question of the *seven* and *ten* Sephiroths, and the *seven* and *ten* Rishis, Manus, etc. It shows that in sober truth there is not, nor can there be any fundamental disagreement between the esoteric philosophy of the Trans- and *Cis*-Himalayan Adepts. The reader is referred, moreover, to the earlier pages of the above mentioned article, in which it is stated that "the

knowledge of the occult powers of nature possessed by the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis was learnt by the ancient Adepts of India, and was appended by them to the esoteric doctrine taught by the residents of the sacred island (now the Gobi desert)*. The Thibetan Adepts, however (their precursors of Central Asia), have not accepted the addition" (pp. 155-156). But this difference between the two doctrines does not include the septenary division, as it was universal after it had originated with the Atlanteans, who, as the Fourth Race, were of course an earlier race than the Fifth—the Aryan.

Thus, from the purely metaphysical standpoint, the remarks made on the Septenary Division in the *"Bhagavad-Gita"* Lecture hold good today, as they did five or six years ago in the article, "Brahmanism on the Sevenfold principle in Man," their apparent discrepancy notwithstanding. For purposes of purely theoretical esotericism they are as valid in Buddhist as they are in Brahmanical philosophy. Therefore, when Mr. Subba Row proposes to hold to "the time-honoured classification of four principles" in a lecture on a Vedanta work—the Vedantic classification, however, dividing man into *five "kosas"* (sheaths) and the *Atma* (the sixth nominally, of course),† he simply shows thereby that he desires to remain strictly within theoretical and metaphysical, and also orthodox computations of the same. This is how I understand his words, at any rate. For the *Taraka Raj-Yoga* classification is again *three upadhis,* the *Atma* being the fourth principle, and no *upadhi,* of course, as it is one with Parabrahm. This is again shown by himself in a little article called "Septenary Division in different Indian systems."‡

Why then should not "Buddhist" Esotericism, so-called, resort to such a division? It is perhaps "misleading"—that is admitted; but surely it cannot be called "unscientific." I will even permit myself to call that adjective a thoughtless expression, since it has been shown to be on the contrary very "scientific" by Mr. Subba Row himself; and quite mathematically so, as the afore-quoted algebraic demonstration of the same proves it. I say that the division is due to nature herself pointing out its necessity in kosmos and man; just

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*See *Isis Unveiled,* Vol. I, pp. 598-9, and the appendices by the Editor to the above quoted article in *Five Years of Theosophy.*

†This is the division given to us by Mr. Subba Row. See *Five Years of Theosophy,* p. 136, article signed T. S.

‡*Ibid.,* p. 185.

because the number seven is "a power, and a spiritual force" in its combination of *three* and *four,* of the triangle and the quaternary. It is no doubt far more convenient to adhere to the fourfold classification in a metaphysical and synthetical sense, just as I have adhered to the threefold classification—of body, soul and spirit—in *Isis Unveiled,* because had I then adopted the septenary division, as I have been compelled to do later on for purposes of strict analysis, no one would have understood it, and the multiplication of principles, instead of throwing light upon the subject, would have introduced endless confusion. But now the question has changed, and the position is different. We have *unfortunately*—for it was premature—opened a chink in the Chinese wall of esotericism, and we cannot now close it again, even if we would. I for one had to pay a heavy price for the indiscretion, but I will not shrink from the results.

I maintain then, that when once we pass from the plane of pure subjective reasoning on esoteric matters to that of practical demonstration in Occultism, wherein each principle and attribute has to be analysed and defined in its application to the phenomena of daily and especially of *post-mortem* life, the sevenfold classification is the right one. For it is simply a convenient division which prevents in no wise the recognition of but *three* groups—which Mr. Subba Row calls "four principles associated with four *upadhis,* and which are associated in their turns with four distinct states of consciousness."* This is the Bhagavad Gita classification, it appears; but not that of the Vedanta, nor—what the Raj-Yogis of the *pre*-Aryasanga schools and of the *Mahayana* system held to and still hold beyond the Himalayas, and their system is almost identical with the *Taraka Raj-Yoga,* —the difference between the latter and the Vedanta classification having been pointed out to us by Mr. Subba Row in his little article on the "Septenary Division in different Indian systems." The Taraka Raj-Yogis recognize only *three upadhis* in which *Atma* may work, which, in India, if I mistake not, are the *Jagrata,* or waking state of

*A crowning proof of the fact that the division is arbitrary and varies with the schools it belongs to, is in the words published in "Personal and Impersonal God" by Mr. Subba Row, where he states that "we have *six* states of consciousness, either objective or subjective . . . and a perfect state of unconsciousness, etc." (See *Five Years of Theosophy,* pp. 200 and 201.) Of course those who do not hold to the old school of Aryan and Arhat Adepts are in no way bound to adopt the septenary classification.

consciousness (corresponding to *Sthulopadhi*); the *Swapna,* or dreaming state (in *Sukshmopadhi*); and the *Sushupti,* or causal state, produced by, and through *Karanopadhi,* or what we call *Buddhi.* But then, in transcendental states of *Samadhi,* the body with its *linga sarira,* the *vehicle* of the life-principle, is entirely left out of consideration: the three states of consciousness are made to refer only to the three (with *Atma* the fourth) principles which remain after death. And here lies the real key to the septenary division of man, the three principles coming in as an addition only during his life.

(To be continued.)

THE STATES OF "MATTER"

Our doctrine shows man a *septenary* during life; a *quintile* just after death, in Kamaloka; and a threefold *Ego,* Spirit-Soul, and consciousness in *Devachan.* This separation, first in "the Meadows of Hades," as Plutarch calls the *Kama-loka,* then in Devachan, was part and parcel of the performances during the sacred Mysteries, when the candidates for initiation enacted the whole drama of death, and the resurrection as a glorified spirit, by which name we mean *Consciousness.* . . . Do not imagine that because man is called septenary, then *quintuple* and a triad, he is a compound of seven, five, or three *entities;* or, as well expressed by a Theosophical writer, of skins to be peeled off like the skins of an onion. The "principles," save the body, the life, and the astral *eidolon,* all of which disperse at death, are simply *aspects* and *states of consciousness.* There is but one *real* man, enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence, if not in form, and this is *Manas,* the Mind-man or embodied Consciousness. The objection made by materialists, who deny the possibility of mind and consciousness acting without matter is worthless in our case. We do not deny the soundness of their argument; but we simply ask our opponents, "Are you acquainted *with all the states of matter,* you who knew hitherto but of three? And how do you know whether that which we refer to as ABSOLUTE CONSCIOUSNESS or Deity for ever invisible and unknowable, be not that which, though it eludes for ever our human finite conception, is still universal Spirit-matter or matter-Spirit *in its absolute infinitude?*"

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

KERNELS OF WISDOM

"The corruption of the best produces the worst."
—Greek

THE problem of the Origin of Evil presents itself perennially for solution. By formulating fixed creeds and dogmas, the theologians of the day pretend to have solved the question *for* all men, and for all time. They assure their adherents that belief in the dicta of the church is all that is required or necessary, that beyond such belief nothing can be known or discovered. But the human mind and heart are such that blind acceptance cannot long satisfy. Every human being is faced constantly with the problem of both Good and Evil in the affairs of his own life. They arise anew each day, and must be met with a perception and understanding that are fresh, alive, firsthand. It is not enough, if one would act wisely and avoid evil, to acquaint himself with the beliefs and dogmas of a church. It is not enough to be told that the act of some distant ancestor led to the *Fall,* and that as a result the whole human family is now born under the curse of sin and iniquity. Like all true myths and legends, the story of the *Fall* is symbolic—an ever-present drama enacted each day upon the stage of every man's life.

The above quoted aphorism confirms the saying, "Evil is but Good gone astray." Is it not true that there can be no false coin unless there is first a genuine currency to falsify? Is it not a fact that there could be no such thing as sickness or disease unless there were *laws of health* for men to violate? And does not the Bible itself declare that Satan is the Son of God, that Lucifer, before his fall, was the highest and noblest of the archangels? Every ancient mythology depicts the same great tragedy, the constant and eternal struggle for predominance between God (Good) and the D'Evil (Evil), the ever-living representation of mankind's rises and falls.

> The legend of the "Fallen Angels," in its esoteric signification, contains the key to the manifold contradictions of human character; it points to the secret of man's self-consciousness; it is the angle-iron on which hinges his entire life-cycle;—the history of his evolution and growth. . . . It gives a clue to the vexed question of the Origin of Evil; and shows how man himself is the separator of the One into various contrasted aspects. (*S.D.* II, 274.)

It is the teaching of Theosophy that every human being is a God incarnate—a pillar of Light within, a form of clay material upon the lower surface. The legend of the Fallen Angels refers not only to the descent into matter of mankind as a whole, but also to the individual incarnations of each soul every time it assumes a body of flesh and blood. Upon entering the body, the nature of *Manas,* or mind, becomes dual. This old tenet is the source perhaps of the Kabalistic doctrine of the *Dual Ego*—the higher side of which they called *Metatron,* man's guardian angel, and the lower, *Samael,* his evil demon. Allegorically, these two are represented as inseparable companions of man through life—the one inspiring, illuminating, and urging on to greater heights, the other transforming those inspirations into personal greed and ambition.

The holier and more sacred a thing or function may be, the direr its results if misused or perverted. The more basic and necessary any element is to the well-being of an organism, the greater the damage if it is lacking. Is it not a fact that the deepest heartaches come from those we love most? Is it not true that the worst crimes in history have been perpetrated by men of highest intelligence? The whole of our experience tells the story that the most destructive forces in the world at any time are those which represent corruptions or perversions of that which is most basic and real.

Present day *religion* is an example. All great Sages have declared that religion is the most sacred of sciences, that its function in the life of man is of paramount importance. Everyone recognizes that the religious elements in his own nature are the deepest, subtlest, and most profound. The troubled and afflicted always fall back in the last resort upon their religious or spiritual stamina. We all realize the importance of a balanced moral sense, but why is it that when things go wrong we do not have the courage to question our religious foundations, upon which that sense depends? Why is it that so few are honest enough and impartial enough in their thinking to see that in a world so full of chaos something very basic must be wrong, and to trace the evil to its proper source—corrupt religion, with its spores of warring sects.

The term *religion* comes from the Latin *re* = back, and *ligere* = to bind. It means to *bind back* to the Source, to tie together into one great Whole. The essence of true religion is unity, solidarity,

brotherhood, non-separateness. Yet, is it not apparent that organized sectarianism is one of the most separative forces in the world today, that instead of uniting men and helping them to live as brothers, it divides them race from race, one man from another? Who can deny that the deepest schisms and antagonisms are religious ones? Who can fail to see that the hates and jealousies among men arise more from sectarian instruction and differences than from any other cause? Until individuals, of whatever creed, are willing to question their sacred misconceptions, no real advance can be made. Until men are ready to consider any statement of truth on its own merits, regardless of by whom made—whether by Buddha, Krishna, Jesus, or Confucius—the chief source of animosity will remain.

The real name for modern sectarianism is *religion gone astray.* Instead of stimulating feelings of brotherhood and compassion, which are natural expressions of the inner moral sense, present-day sects encourage jealousies and divisions. Instead of pursuing knowledge and understanding, they hold men in ignorance and fear. Instead of inculcating self-reliance, they teach dependence upon outside powers for help and guidance. It would be almost impossible to calculate the injury that is being wrought daily upon the human mind and heart by corruption of the religious instincts in man.

The dogma of *miracle* is another example of how corrupt religious teachings produce evil results. In its present perverted form, the idea of miracles destroys all sense of responsibility. It leads men to believe that in some supernatural way they can act evilly and get away with it, that the effects of wrong causation can be wiped out. It leads them to hope that by prayer or favor the burden of their sins will be relieved vicariously.

The idea of miracle is an obvious perversion of the universal Law of Karma. Both Science and Religion perpetuate the delusion by their limited interpretations of that which is eternal, inclusive, unlimited. How can there be miracle when everything that happens is the result of an antecedent Cause? By restricting the operation of Law to what they call inert matter, scientists deny thereby the possibility of higher super-sensuous Laws in the universe, which alone can account for the unexplained phenomena of life. Theologians corrupt the doctrine by endowing their saints with the power to override the Laws of Nature—as though they were but toys!

The corruption of the best always produces the worst. *Democracy,* perverted, and not lived up to, leads to licence, chaos, tyranny. Does the fact of living under a *system* of freedom make men free? Can it be said that because people adopt a form of administration that provides opportunity for self-government, they are therefore self-governed? Democracy, in its true spirit, is a way of life—not just a form of government. It is based upon the principle of self-rule as opposed to the principle of oligarchy or dictatorship, and the maintenance of its spirit therefore requires self-rule. It requires of its advocates a continuous exemplification of the principles of sacrifice and self-discipline, of tolerance, trust, and respect for the rights of others. Its spread is through the power of example—not through intellectual preachments nor by the use of force.

Demon est Deus inversus. Under the shadowy influence of the lower selfish mind, brotherhood turns to clannishness, self-respect turns to pride, enthusiasm to fanaticism, and generosity to extravagance. Under the lethal promptings of one's inner "demon," all high attributes of soul undergo subtle transformations and reappear as evil, sorrow, suffering. Where is the man who can find the line of demarcation between the high and the low aspects of his own mind? Where is the person who knows the difference between love and infatuation, between tenacity and stubbornness, between faith and blind belief? Where is the individual who has mastered the mystery of his dual Ego, so as to assure himself that he is not daily crossing over the line that divides the Satanic from the Divine? The Origin of Evil is not to be found in some particular place or time in history, but in the recurrent impulses of a mind governed by desire.

The price of freedom, it is said, is eternal vigilance. By the same token, the price of preserving the "best," of maintaining the true spirit underlying every old idea and custom is an honest, unbiased mind, a pure devoted heart. Buddha held that the Temple of Philosophical Knowledge must be constantly re-edified by inquiry, study, work. As the house that is not kept in repair falls into decay, so it is with Knowledge. A truth perceived and not acted upon turns to poison in the system. The Esoteric philosophy alone, says H. P. Blavatsky, is "calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life."

STUDIES IN KARMA

"Dianetics"

The chief condition of success is habit. In the first trial nearly everything fails, but after several everything succeeds. This process of *breaking in* a patient has been called hypnotic education. The determination of the subject not to be entranced has no effect. (Review of *Le Magnétisme Animal,* by Alfred Binet and Charles Féré, collaborators of Prof. J. M. Charcot, 1887. See *The Theosophist,* April, 1887, p. 402.)

The exaltation of memory during somnambulism, though it does not give absolute proof to the theory that nothing is lost in the memory, shows at any rate that the memory of *preservation* is much greater than is generally imagined in comparison with the memory of *reproduction,* or recollection. It is evident that in a great number of cases, where we believe the memory is completely blotted out, it is nothing of the kind. The trace is always there, but what is lacking is the power to evoke it; and it is highly probable that if we were subjected to hypnotism, or the action of suitable excitants, memories to all appearance dead might be revived. —Alfred Binet and Charles Féré

THE world of the twentieth century is a world ripe for panaceas. There has been evidence enough that the cycle of psychism, which students of Theosophy have expected to see blossom in all its fullness during the middle years of the century, will present much more than a mere repetition of the Spiritualistic interests of a hundred years ago. The pressures of our time are different from the pressures of 1850. An atmosphere of desperation and extremity is all-pervading, today. There is personal, cultural, national, and international anxiety. The will-to-believe gains abnormal energy from the frustrated lives of great masses of human beings. Instead of wondering about death, people wonder how they can become equal to life. Not Spiritualistic "communications" from the dead, but "how to win friends and influence people"—how to be a better salesman, to develop one's "personality," to live without pain, stress, or worry—these are the psychic longings of the age.

As part of—or rather, one might say, in defense against—this general tendency, a "new science of mental health" has recently made its appearance, heralded, appropriately enough, in the May issue of *Astounding Science Fiction,* and bursting into public attention

a month or so later in the form of a 400-page book. *Dianetics* is the name given this new "science" by its discoverer or inventor, L. Ron. Hubbard. Hubbard is an engineer and writer who apparently makes regular contributions of the "Astounding" variety, and the racy narrative style appropriate to scientific fantasies makes his book on Dianetics easy-reading, plausible, and quite informal.

Dianetics (from the root meaning "thought," says Hubbard, loosely) is offered as an experimental method needing *immediate* verification on as many fronts as possible. The author would have all who read his book embark on dianetic research without delay, if they so desire. He merely suggests "a few hour's study" before experimenting. Mr. Hubbard reports that he has been ten or twelve years evolving the new "science," but now that he has done the monumental preliminary work, the material is so simple and the therapy technique so foolproof that no experience is necessary.*

Needless to say, there is no hint that the therapist's motive may be important, not to say crucial; nor is any particular understanding of the mind and its functions required. Hubbard treats all questions of what and why with ill-concealed scorn, and has concentrated exclusively, one might say, on making things happen. He does go so far as to state, at one point, that engineers make the best "auditors" is not strong on self-analysis.) If one could imagine a technocracy of the mind, Dianetics would have first rights to the title.

Ignoring for the moment the unblushing claims to absolute originality with which the book opens (Hubbard blames them on the publisher), let us briefly mention the elements of dianetics, and the therapy method presently in use. "Presently in use," because, resting doggedly on the trial-and-error principle, Hubbard, on page 408, announces his belief that in twenty or a hundred years the dianetic therapy outlined in his book will be obsolete: it is still being tested, and better means are expected to appear.

For the most colorful performer in the human mind, Hubbard has adapted the term "engram." Engram originally meant, in psychology, "a lasting trace left in an organism by psychic experience," but in Hubbard's scheme the engram is considerably anthropomor-

*Evidence of Hubbard's persuasiveness is the case of one hypnotherapist (who describes himself as "also a very good auto-hypnotic subject") who began his first dianetic experiment, with a house guest for his subject, two minutes after finishing Hubbard's book. As a psychic phenomenon, Dianetics is already holding its own!

phised, and behaves "almost like an entity." (The existence of elementals, presumably, has been kept a dark secret from dianetic researchers.) The engram is a recorded moment of pain or painful emotion, impacted in the "memory bank" of a primitive layer of consciousness to which Hubbard gives the graphic name of "reactive mind." Completely divorced from rational consciousness, the reactive mind, we are told, operates instinctively, unreflectively. When the basic purpose of human life—SURVIVAL, as Hubbard writes it—is threatened, especially in moments of unconsciousness or shock, the "analyzer" (conscious, rational mind) fades out, and the reactive mind "keys in." (Hubbard approaches the "mind" by strict analogy from the electric computer machines.)

It is in these moments of unconsciousness (from whatever cause) that engrams gain entry. Once in the "memory bank," they operate unnoticed upon the organism as a whole, and to these unknown dictators Hubbard traces all psychosomatic ills, insanity, and aberrated personalities. The engram, in Dianetic theory, is *pain* and *painful emotion.* Pleasure impacts are said to be recorded elsewhere, and are held to be dianetically not significant, since they are not supposed to interfere with rational deduction. (Hubbard believes them permanent.)

Erasing the engram is the business of dianetic therapy, which consists in re-living the moment of pain until the emotional charge is dissipated and the experience can be "re-filed" in the "standard memory banks" of the conscious, rational mind. (The rational mind, says Hubbard, is a perfect computer, once its mechanism is relieved of the confusing, extraneous data supplied by engrams, and therefore when engrammic records become part of "conscious memory" their nefarious influence is supposed to be at an end.) Since an engram of which the mind is conscious is a contradiction in dianetic terms, re-living engrams necessitates by-passing the conscious mind, or the analyzing conscious mind, and consequently, dianetic therapy must operate with the patient in a "hypnotic amnesia trance" (to use one of Hubbard's expressions), despite all the wishful thinking to the contrary.

Hypnotism *per se* was used by Hubbard in gathering data for dianetics, but he denounces hypnotism as a therapeutic device, asserting repeatedly that dianeticists should not use hypnosis. Hypnotism,

he declares, is "a wild variable," and "belongs in your parlor in about the same way the atom bomb does." Nevertheless, the technique of dianetic "reverie" and the necessity for "sonic recall" (actual re-hearing of sounds and words from past experiences), and "visual recall," inevitably raises the question as to whether or not Hubbard has rejected the *principle* of hypnotism. Certainly, dianetic therapy will go a long way toward increasing "suggestibility." Dr. Frederick J. Hacker, a psychiatrist, is of the opinion that Dianetics "is more the symptom of a disease than its cure" and "pretends to offer a relief from a condition it itself represents." (Los Angeles *Daily News,* Sept. 9.)

Hubbard's book mentions the idea of reincarnation, in passing, but this hypothesis, he says, is not "needed" for dianetic purposes—a typical example of the limits within which he is seeking "impartial" and "new" information. It was H. P. Blavatsky's opinion that—

> By trying the *magic* effect of the human will on weaker wills; by deriding the existence of *occult* forces in Nature—forces whose name is legion—and yet calling out these, under the pretext that they are *no* independent forces at all, not even psychic in their nature, but "connected with known *physical* laws" (Binet and Féré), men in authority are virtually responsible for all the dire effects that are and will be following their dangerous public experiments. . . . Thus experiments in "suggestion" by persons ignorant of the occult laws, are the most dangerous of pastimes. The action and reaction of ideas on the *inner lower* "Ego," has never been studied so far, because that Ego itself is *terra incognita* (even when not denied) to the men of science. Moreover, such performances before a promiscuous public are a danger in themselves.

If the Theosophical teachers emphasize the *black magic* of hypnotism almost exclusively, this is probably for the reason that no one but an "Adept of the Right-hand Path" could use hypnotism as white magic—in which case it would not *be* "hypnotism." The most fevered protestations of pure motive and altruistic purpose on the part of hypnotists are beside the point. From the basis of occult science, the only beings sure of their motives and irrevocably committed to altruism as a principle are—the perfected men. It is therefore no crime for a human being to have "mixed motives," but it is unquestionably the better part of valor for all *human* beings to refrain from entering the psychic realm, except naturally and as a

matter of strict necessity. In the astral world, motives are projected with far greater power than through lethargic physical matter.

Possibly, Hubbard himself has some latent sense of the hazardous features of dianetic therapy. In speaking of hypnotism, he observes that *suggestions do not always vanish,* despite the intention of the operator. While stoutly denying that the "repeater" technique* and "reverie" involve hypnosis, Hubbard insists that a "Canceller" be installed at the beginning of every therapy session and re-impressed at the end. The "Canceller" is the direction that no remark or suggestion received from the auditor is to be retained by the patient. Hubbard is extremely anxious that the auditor shall not, intentionally or unintentionally, install new engrams while the patient is in reverie. Out of this concern (which would be an exaggerated one, if the patient were *not* in some form of hypnosis or suggestible state), comes one of the most valuable passages in the book: the Auditor's Code, the crux of dianetics.

No technique is better than the technician, yet Hubbard several times stills the misgivings of would-be auditors by the bland statement that dianetics cannot hurt the mind, cannot "injure the mechanism." On the other hand, the auditor is advised to follow the Code absolutely and without deviation, for dianetic treatment is a precision instrument of immense potentialities. What are we to conclude?

To the layman, Dianetics may be a dazzling new idea, and psychologists who attempt to show that all Hubbard's "discoveries" are to be found in the researches of his predecessors will find themselves talking into the wind. Even less popular with dianetics enthusiasts would be the theosophist's consideration of this "new science" as a study in the karma of irresponsibility, the karma of mediumship and psychism, and especially in the *karma* of hypnotism. In the twentieth-century cycle of psychism, hypnotism appears to be usurping the place spiritualism occupied about a hundred years ago, and those who know the history of the abandonment of Mesmer's theories and practice (Mesmer sought to have his patients remain *conscious* during his treatment), and the consequent development of the opposite technique—hypnotism—are better prepared to account for the confusion in many branches of psychic research today.

*Stimulating the patient to produce engrams by repeating certain catch phrases or clichés of psychological unease, such as " I might as well give up," "I'm so confused," "I never remember names," etc.

Since Hubbard is an engineer, it is hardly surprising that the phrase "It works," should be for him a mantram, an axiom, an all-justifying principle (unless, of course, it is an engram). In terms of logic, "It works" is the undistributed middle of the dianetic syllogism. Dianetic therapy gets "results." What more, Hubbard naïvely asks, do we need? If at first an auditor fails to get results, he must not be discouraged; he has only to continue. Hubbard assures one and all that "if you keep asking for it, you will get it." ("It" in this case being the engram.) With the utmost self-confidence, and with a righteous contempt for the results of any experiments other than his own, Hubbard pursues the ancient principle that the end justifies the means. Vehemently opposed to "butchery" of the brain by lobotomy, and to narcosynthesis, shock therapy, hypno-analysis, and the use of nitrous oxide, he nevertheless offers for dianetics the same "proof of value" as did the proponents of each of these unnatural techniques before him. It is the same argument, in principle, which rationalized both the atom bomb and the concentration camp—the only argument for the use of force: *it works.*

Hubbard is doubtless sincere in his attempt to alleviate the miseries of the mentally ill. The dianetics program contemplates the application of dianetic therapy to the over-all problems of punishment and crime, marriage and divorce laws, education, war, and preventive therapy. But sincerity is not enough. Nor are hard labor, sustained effort, and kind intentions. Hubbard might at least have gone about the business of fathoming the human mind as he would the study of engineering. It is possible to assume that no one in the world, in all past centuries, has ever discovered anything about engineering: but this approach to the science of engineering is puerile. For Hubbard, then, to postulate that never before has anyone made "his" discoveries about the human mind is equally juvenile, even if he himself has somehow escaped contact with the results of all previous investigations.

Brushing "mysticism" out of his way, Hubbard has also eliminated the checks and balances which might have made dianetics a genuine contribution to scientific psychology. Instead, technically speaking, dianetics should probably be described as a form of mediumship practised by the patient at the will of the auditor. The operator is convinced (Hubbard's book is one long attempt to graft this

particular conviction on the reader's mind) that "there always are engrams" and that only dianetic therapy can remove them. Under such circumstances, the bare repetition of "catch phrases"—colorless and "impersonal" though the repetition be intended to be—is enough to secure the patient's "cooperation," that is, a standard dianetic result. Thus dianetics is less "thought" than thought *control,* the fixing of the auditor's will—or the flow of his "animal magnetism"—being accomplished by the Hubbard formula: "If you keep asking for it, you'll get it." It can be remembered, in this connection, that, as H. P. Blavatsky has written, "It would be extremely difficult to find on earth a human being who could not be more or less influenced by the 'Animal Magnetism' or by the active *Will* (which sends out that 'Magnetism') of another."

Dianetics will have a certain vogue, as the "newest" mental science, since "confession" is still believed to be good for the soul. To be philosophical, however, we must follow out this notion to its logical conclusion. When this is done, we are again confronted with a fear-producing mechanism—disbelief in self, distrust of one's own powers, and apprehension lest Life or Fate should deal us a hand we can not play. Of what avail is it to know that a dianetic therapist can erase engrams, if at any time the mind may meet a situation that it cannot cope with? All the locks on all the stable doors for miles around will not make up for the one stolen horse: all the marvelous techniques that have ever been invented for the "cure" of mental ills will not compensate the human being for the loss of faith in himself.

Karma, the doctrine of responsibility, may not be comfortable to begin with, but a great load of fear and mistrust of the universe and of ourselves is lifted from the mind that realizes the unalterable justice of the universal moral law. Psychologists have exclaimed over the fact that people cannot forgive themselves for the wrong they have done—no amount of "laying one's sins on Jesus" (or, we might add, on the psychoanalyst's couch) eradicates the deep-seated sense of self-judgment. The "sin-complex" needs to be replaced by the intuition of our own internal power and responsibility, which can only be as great as is our knowledge. Which shall we cherish and strengthen—our thirst for health-phenomena, or philosophy? There is no soul-satisfying philosophy in "dianetics."

SHALL WE TEACH CLAIRVOYANCE?

A Note of Warning

MY attention has been arrested by the address delivered in the Adyar course by Dr. Daly and reported in the September *Theosophist.* It is entitled "Clairvoyance."

Coming out in the Adyar course, it has a certain flavor of authority which will appeal to many members of the Society and may cause them to adopt the suggestions for practise given in the latter part of the address. Yet at the same time it is very true that the Theosophical Society is not responsible for the utterances of members in their private capacity.

The fact that clairvoyance is a power sought after by many persons cannot be disputed, but the questions, Is it well to try to develop clairvoyance? and Shall we teach it? have not yet been definitely decided. Hence I may be permitted to give my views upon them.

At the outset I desire to declare my personal attitude on these questions and my beliefs as to facts. In using the term "clairvoyance" I intend to include in it all clear perception on that plane.

1. I have for many years been convinced by proofs furnished by others and from personal experience that clairvoyance is a power belonging to man's inner nature; and also that it is possessed by the animal kingdom.

2. This faculty is either inherited or educed by practise.

3. Those who have it by birth are generally physically diseased or nervously deranged. The cases where clairvoyance is shown by a perfectly healthy and well-balanced person are rare.

4. The records of spiritualism for over forty years in America conclusively prove that clairvoyance cannot be safely sought after by persons who have no competent guide; that its pursuit has done harm; and that almost every medium to whom one puts the question "Am I able to develop clairvoyance?" will reply "Yes."

5. There are no competent guides in this pursuit to be found here or in Europe who are willing to teach one how to acquire it without danger.

Note.—This article first appeared in *The Path,* December, 1890.—Eds. Theosophy.

6. The qualifications such a guide should possess render the finding of one difficult if not impossible. They are: the power to look within and see clearly the whole inner nature of the student; a complete knowledge of all the planes upon which clairvoyance acts, including knowledge of the source, the meaning, and the effect of all that is perceived by the clairvoyant; and last, but not least, the power to stop at will the exercise of the power. Evidently these requirements call for an adept.

Who are the teachers of clairvoyance, and those who advise that it be practised? In the main, the first are mediums, and any investigator knows how little they know. Every one of them differs from every other in his powers. The majority have only one sort of clairvoyance; here and there are some who combine, at most, three classes of the faculty. Not a single one is able to mentally see behind the image or idea perceived, and cannot say in a given case whether the image seen is the object itself or the result of a thought from another mind. For in these planes of perception the thoughts of men become as objective as material objects are to our human eyes. It is true that a clairvoyant can tell you that what is being thus perceived is not apprehended by the physical eye, but beyond that he cannot go. Of this I have had hundreds of examples. In 99 out of 100 instances the seer mistook the thought from another mind for a clairvoyant perception of a living person or physical object.

The seers of whom I speak see always according to their inner tendency, which is governed by subtle laws of heredity which are wholly unknown to scientific men and much more to mediums and seers. One will only reach the symbolic plane; another, that which is known to occultists as the positive side of sound; another, to the negative or positive aspects of the epidermis and its emanations; and so on through innumerable layer after layer of clairvoyance and octave after octave of vibrations. They all know but the little they have experienced, and for any other person to seek to develop the power is dangerous. The philosophy of it all, the laws that cause the image to appear and disappear, are *terra incognita.*

The occult septenary scheme in nature with all its modifications produces multiple effects, and no mere clairvoyant is able to see the truth that underlies the simplest instance of clairvoyant perception.

If a man moves from one chair to another, immediately hundreds of possibilities arise for the clairvoyant eye, and he alone who is a highly trained and philosophical seer—an adept, in short—can combine them all so as to arrive at true clear-perception. In the simple act described almost all the centers of force in the moving being go into operation, and each one produces its own peculiar effect in the astral light. At once the motion made and thoughts aroused elicit their own sound, color, motion in ether, amount of etheric light, symbolic picture, disturbance of elemental forces, and so on through the great catalogue. Did but one wink his eye, the same effects follow in due order. And the seer can perceive but that which attunes itself to his own development and personal peculiarities, all limited in force and degree.

What, may I ask, do clairvoyants know of the law of prevention or encrustation which is acting always with many people? Nothing, absolutely nothing. How do they explain those cases where, try as they will, they cannot see anything whatever regarding certain things? Judging from human nature and the sordidness of many schools of clairvoyance, are we not safe in affirming that if there were any real or reliable clairvoyance about us now-a-days among those who offer to teach it or take pay for it, long ago fortunes would have been made by them, banks despoiled, lost articles found, and friends more often reunited? Admitting that there have been sporadic instances of success in these lines, does not the exception prove that true clairvoyance is not understood or likely to be?

But what shall theosophists do? Stop all attempts at clairvoyance. And why? Because it leads them slowly but surely—almost beyond recall—into an interior and exterior passive state where the will is gradually overpowered and they are at last in the power of the demons who lurk around the threshold of our consciousness. Above all, follow no advice to "sit for development." Madness lies that way. The feathery touches which come upon the skin while trying these experiments are said by mediums to be the gentle touches of "the spirits." But they are not. They are caused by the ethereal fluids from within us making their way out through the skin and thus producing the illusion of a touch. When enough has gone out, then the victim is getting gradually negative, the future prey for spooks and will-o'-the-wisp images.

"But *what*," they say, "shall we pursue and study?" Study the philosophy of life, leave the decorations that line the road of spiritual development for future lives, and—practise altruism.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

HYPOCRISY OR IGNORANCE

If one accepts the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, which is based on the essential unity of all human beings, there is a long distance yet intervening between that acceptation and its realization, even in those who have adopted the doctrine. It is just the difference between intellectual assent to a moral, philosophical, or occult law, and its perfect development in one's being so that it has become an actual part of ourselves. So when we hear a theosophist say that he could see his children, wife, or parents die and not feel anything whatever, we must infer that there is a hypocritical pretension or very great ignorance. . . .

The doctrines of Theosophy do not ask for nor lead to the cutting out of the human heart of every human feeling. Indeed, that is an impossibility, one would think, seeing that the feelings are an integral part of the constitution of man, for in the principle called *Kama*—the desires and feelings—we have the basis of all our emotions, and if it is prematurely cut out of any being death or worse must result. It is very true that theosophy as well as all ethical systems demands that the being who has conscience and will, such as are found in man, shall control this principle of *Kama* and not be carried away by it nor be under its sway. This is self-control, mastery of the human body, steadiness in the face of affliction, but it is not extirpation of feelings which one has to control.

The scientific part of theosophy, beginning and ending with universal brotherhood, insists upon such an intense and ever-present thought upon the subject, coupled with a constant watch over all faults of mind and speech, that in time an actual change is produced in the material person, as well as in the immaterial one within who is the mediator or way between the purely corporeal lower man and his Higher divine self. This change, it is very obvious, cannot come about at once nor in the course of years of effort.

—EUSEBIO URBAN (WILLIAM Q. JUDGE)

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

WHAT *good does it do to try to convince people of the truth when actually their convictions seem to be born with them or else formed without the aid of conscious reasoning?*

It is true that convincing is not something we can do for anyone else, since rarely is the growing tip of a man's nature revealed to another. All our progress, it would seem, is molded out of a kind of self-sufficiency—either we, ourselves, or circumstances insist on isolation for the partaking of a great vision. We know from our own experience that convictions are not necessarily born with us, but they are made a part of us through a long course of action upon which we perhaps unwittingly launched ourselves. Few are those who begin active social life with their principles already formed. Most of us evolve them slowly and painfully from an examination of our mistakes and miseries. Another person may contribute the inspiration for a few lines of our private code of behavior, but this we accept only when it strikes a responding chord in ourselves. The convictions we live by are arrived at by *our own living,* and not from parlor discussions.

What of our part in trying to bring our philosophy before others? We should not think of this as unrewarding because so few seem to hear and understand or to be genuinely interested. Our capacities, though expanding, are limited. For instance, how close to reality do we live, from day to day? That is, how much into the heart of things do we try to penetrate, consistently; or are we content to skim the surface of events and people with no attempt to match depth for depth? Can we not see that it is only those who live deeply who can reach and stir the "deeps" of others? Many a brilliant man and persuasive orator makes his mark on his fellow-men, but it is not the mark of the heart, nor does he tap the root of the men he influences. The stories of Jesus and Buddha illuminate for us the mantramic effect which such men have on others, for they speak out of the True directly to the soul, and gain rapport immediately with the real in every individual. A similar power, in degree, seems to have been Lincoln's—the power of complete sincerity and simplicity and of the wisdom that springs from them both.

Robert Crosbie quotes an interesting distinction between the perfect man and the avatar, which we may apply here, for it shows the ever-deepening levels at which men may be influenced: "A *Siddha-Purusha* (perfect man) is like an archaeologist who removes the dust and lays open an old well which has been covered up by ages of disuse. The *Avatara,* on the other hand, is like an engineer who sinks a new well in a place where there was no water before. Great Men give salvation to those only who have the waters of piety hidden in themselves, but the *Avatara* saves him too whose heart is devoid of love and dry as a desert." Our talents of course fall far short of these powers of service, and yet each of us can deepen and enlarge his power, by striving to sink his own well ever deeper into the reality of his life.

What is meant by "original sin"?

The dictionary defines it as "the first sin committed by Adam as related to or manifested in its consequences to his posterity of the human race." In the *New England Primer,* a famous text for little children of a few centuries ago, the whole thing was put even more succinctly—"A is for Adam. In Adam's fall we sinnéd all."

Now what does this mean? If we look at the idea and not at the dogma—for a dogma is never to be personally examined—several things come to mind: to begin with, the first "sin" obviously wasn't committed by Adam, but by God, who allowed (if "he" did not encourage) the snake to enter Eden and tempt Eve to curiosity about the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God's curiosity, then, as to how man would meet the situation he was placed in (although with omnipotence and omniscience, what room for curiosity?) preceded that of Adam and Eve. Then too, how can the taint of Adam's fall affect all the men who followed him, if God is supposed to *create* every soul, and present men are *not* the product of an independent evolution from past humanities?

It would be more correct to say that the concept of "original sin" has *no* meaning, for it is a jaundiced theological view of man's primal impulse and purpose, which is to incarnate in matter and to work through it to a knowledge of what is good and what evil. Read in the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 409 ff.) the section on the "Fall." "Original sin" may not be stressed as crudely today as in Calvin's

time, but it remains, covered with the cloak of "humility" and "a sense of personal unworthiness before the reality of the presence of God." Whatever specific variations in its meaning, "original sin" still adds up to the degradation of man.

One often has too many things he wants to do or to learn, and they seem to overwhelm him so that he can hardly do anything. Is this a form of anxiety or impatience?

Probably it is; certainly it is a form of anxiety to let things overwhelm us, whether because we fear to face them, or because we know not which to face first. We have probably noticed that this condition occurs periodically throughout our lives. The very young child is reaching out eagerly in all directions at once, trying to encompass his ever-expanding universe. Then things quiet down for a while and proceed in a more orderly manner—as if the child had overcome his initial confusion at meeting so many new things, and had planned out a more systematic method of procedure. At the so-called adolescent stage, there is another period of strenuous inquiry and, consequently, a degree of confusion, as the young person tries to understand the many new problems which face him when he prepares to take his place in the adult world. Impatience and anxiety may well be present, but they would seem to be more in the nature of effects, not causes, of expanded interests.

There is a difference, for instance, between being oppressed by the number of things waiting for us that we *have* to do, and being bewildered by the number of things we would *like* to do—these two conditions typifying, respectively, the negative and the positive approach to life. An individual inclines, by temperament, to one or the other of these attitudes; that is, he starts off this life with a tendency to retreat from problems or to rush madly out and precipitate them. Anxiety is the lot of the "retreater," and impatience the obstacle of the "rusher."

Perhaps, in our enthusiasm, we cannot always keep ourselves from overstepping the limits of our responsibility, but such restraint is what we must eventually acquire, and in the meantime the best way to learn such restraint is to persist, no matter how blunderingly and inadequately, in *following through* what we have undertaken, even though the flame of our original enthusiasm may flicker feebly.

THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES

About Black and White Magicians

HOW *is one to recognize a black magician, and how to treat such an one?"*

It has been well said by H. P. Blavatsky that "each one has a potential black magician within." The black magician is the fruit and perfection of selfishness; selfishness is the triumph of the lower nature. The black magician is the opposite pole in human development to the white Adept, and the latter is the fruit and perfection of the highest qualities in man conjoined with entire communion with spirit; this is the triumph of all that is best in the human being; it is the conscious union with the divine. The black magician stands for self alone, and therefore for discord, separation, and destruction; the white one is the embodiment of union, harmony, and love. In the words of *Bhagavad-Gita* the white adept "is the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and it must follow that the black one is the perfection of material cultivation. In this question, "black" represents self and "white" the spiritual whole.

The query then arises, "why are there now only white magicians and merely embryo black ones?" We think there are but few black adepts existing today, but of the white school there are many. The age and the cycle have not yet come to that point where the black magician has blossomed, and it is easy to understand why there are perfect ones. The question is answered in *Bhagavad-Gita* where it says, "At the night of Brahma the Jivanmukhtas are not absorbed nor destroyed, but all others are; and at the coming forth of the new creation those Jivanmukhtas (white adepts) come forth intact and conscious."[1] This means that at the preceding pralaya—or dissolution—all the black adepts were destroyed; and as now but the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga have elapsed, there has not yet been time to evolve enough full black magicians to make a sensible impression upon us. The first part of the question, therefore,—"How are we to know a black magician"—is premature.

NOTE.— This article was first printed by William Q. Judge in *The Path* for August and September, 1889. The first installment appeared last month.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

[1] A free translation.

Each one of us may become a black magician if we let selfishness have its course, and hence we should ask ourselves, "How may we prevent the possibility of our becoming black magicians in some future age?"

As to the latter part of the question regarding the treatment to be accorded to these as yet mythical beings, it also is very far ahead of time. If such an adept were to appear to you now, he would laugh your threats to scorn. But the sole and sovereign protection against such things and persons is a pure heart and right motive.

PRACTISING FOR OCCULT DEVELOPMENT

Several questions have been received on the subject of the best method to be pursued by members of the Theosophical Society for the development of occult powers.

This desire for such development cannot be commended. Such a desire, standing by itself, while seeming to the questioners to be of great importance, is really of the very least consequence for beginners or to the present state of the theosophical movement. The Society was not organized for the purpose of teaching the practice of occult arts, and it has been distinctly stated in a letter from one of the Masters, who are themselves fully acquainted with all the laws of occultism, that our body was never intended to be a hall of occultism or for the training of aspirants to chelaship. But in the face of that declaration and in spite of all that has been said and written in the magazines of the Society, there are numbers of members still thinking that they will be helped in such sort of study and practice, and who have for some time used what leisure they had in endeavoring to cultivate their psychic powers to the exclusion of work upon the lines laid down by the founders of the Society.

Further than this, some of these devoted students have been reading such works upon practical yoga—or Hatha Yoga—as they could procure, and trying to follow the rules laid down, notwithstanding the distinct caution in all such books that the practices should not be pursued by the student unless he has a competent guide and teacher to help and protect him on the way. Now as there are no such guides in the United States—but all here being alike mere tyros, students, or probationers—it is evident that the very first rules have been violated.

All these practices and studies, so long as they are pursued merely for the powers to be developed, will lead to trouble only and greater ignorance. This is not because there is no truth in practical yoga, but solely from the method adopted and the pure selfishness of the aim before the mind.

What, then, is a Sincere Theosophist to do? Shall He or not Practise Yoga?

We answer by saying that the sincere study of the philosophy and rules of Patanjali's Yoga System may be taken up by any theosophist—on one condition. That is that he shall, as a theosophist, try to carry out the fundamental object of the Society—Universal Brotherhood. In no other way can he receive assistance from any source. Altruism must be made the aim of life, or all practices are absolutely void of lasting effect. We do not speak from a mere theory but from experience; nor do we claim to have perfected altruism in ourselves, but only that, as far as possible, we are trying to make altruism the rule of life.

The Occidental Mind is not Fitted for Yoga

This may be stoutly denied, but what matters it? The fact remains patent to all that among western people there are few persons masters of any part of occult practice. Partial concentration of mind, even—the first step for any practical use of the recondite laws of nature,—is conspicuously absent from our people. Altruism has been for so many centuries a dead letter, and individualism has been so much cultivated, that the soil has become almost barren. Western peoples are not even fitted to attain perfection in Black Magic, which is supposed to be easy to pursue, though in fact not so; but we are able to lay the seeds in this incarnation for further development upon the evil side of our nature in future lives. The practice of altruism as far as we can is the only way in which to avoid suffering in the future.

If Students Believe that Adepts are Behind the Society, They Should Follow Their Advice

Those aspirants for whom these words are written have been laboring under a mistake. They have entered a society formed by Beings in whose existence they profess belief, and have not acted

upon the instructions given, but have selected such portion of those as suited them. The Adepts have distinctly said that occult powers can be obtained, but They have also said that the Society, *which has Their protection and assistance,* is not for occult development, and that the latter cannot be forwarded by Them unless members will preach, teach, and practise Altruism. There is therefore no sort of obligation upon either the Adepts, or the disciples who know, to help members whose chief aim is occult development. We must deserve before we can desire.

While we are endeavoring to understand and practise altruism, and while spreading broadcast the doctrines given out by the Adepts respecting man, his status, future fate, and right way of living, each theosophist can devote some of his time to daily meditation and concentration, and all of his time to extirpation of his faults and vices; when he had made some progress in this, the good karma he may have acquired by working for the cause of Humanity, which is the same as Universal Brotherhood, will help him to get ready to begin occult practices.

WHAT IS THE "DAILY INITIATION"?

It is supposed by some that initiation is always and in every case a set and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

It is in the life of every one to have a moment of choice, but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has then been fixed by all the

acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment, and tendencies which will best carry out our karma. This is a thing solemn enough, and one that makes the "daily initiation" of the very greatest importance to each earnest student. But all of this has been said before, and it is a pity that students persist in ignoring the good advice they receive.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. *It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*

HADJI ERINN

"A CHILD'S SCHOOL . . ."

Are you thinking too much of yourself, your present conditions and your prospects? This is not a firm reliance on the Law of your own being which brings to you the very opportunities that your soul progress needs. What if the future presents no clear view; what if your desires are not fulfilled; what if your progress is not at all apparent—why worry about it? You cannot change it. All you can do is the best you can under existing circumstances, and *that is the very thing you should do,* dismissing from your mind all thought of those things which are not as you would have them.

Your studies and your efforts are futile if you are disturbed inwardly. The first thing then is to get calmness, and that can be reached by taking the firm position that nothing can really injure you, and that you are brave enough and strong enough to endure anything; also that all is a necessary part of your training. Mr. Judge once said, "It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it." Then why not make up your mind to go through it, no matter what the circumstance or condition? Others have; you can. Are you of weaker caliber than they?

We must "have *patience,* as one who doth forevermore endure"—and *forget ourselves* in working for others.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

"THE GITA"—INFORMAL ESSAYS

On Everyday Questions

IT has occasionally been suggested that one of the most rewarding ways to study the *Gita* is to attempt, in reading, to isolate a few key passages, study their philosophical implications over a considerable period of time, and then try to relate the result in "fundamentals" to the rest of Krishna's teaching. Some of the most important passages in the *Gita,* however, are obscure—as most profound things must sometimes seem. Take for example the sentence occurring in the first part of Chapter Six, which is entitled, "Devotion by Means of Self-Restraint." Krishna tells Arjuna that "no one without having previously renounced all intentions can be devoted."

The meaning of devotion is clear enough, for Krishna says there is only one true devotion—that which is devoted to the Supreme Spirit. Since the Supreme Spirit resides in all things, this seems to mean that one must develop an attitude of devotion *to* All Things. Yet, how are we to follow out our devotion for the beings and creatures who move around us unless we seek to assist those who need our assistance? And does this not mean that we shall *intend* to succeed in our efforts of help?

The answer to this paradox must lie in a recognition that this Fire of the Supreme Spirit burns, in all, as the integrity of free choice. How can we be "devoted" to anyone, in the sense Krishna means, if we focus our attention upon some particular accomplishment we should like the object of our attention to achieve? It must be that by recognizing and being devoted to *the free will of another,* we best serve him.

Our "intentions" are usually of a very different nature. They are commonly centered around the desire to reward our friends and punish our enemies. Yet, in the simplest of psychological situations, we certainly must realize that we can sometimes demonstrate our friendship most usefully when we disagree with our friend —and perhaps side with our enemies against him—if at that particular moment a specific position of the "enemy" seems more defensible from the standpoint of impartial justice. Thus Krishna says:

> And he is esteemed among all who, whether amongst his friends and companions, in the midst of enemies or those who stand aloof or remain neutral, with those who love and those who hate, and in the company of sinners or the righteous, is of equal mind.

"Renouncing all intentions" can only mean, in Krishna's context, reliance upon the law of self-determination. We cannot *make* our enemies good nor our friends better. But since it is the absence of a perception of the law of self-determination which makes some men evil and the perception of the law of self-determination which makes others good, we can only assist by demonstrating our own "supreme devotion" to that principle. In so doing we afford an opportunity for the further enlightenment of both "friends and enemies."

Though the above may seem an over-simplification, we shall find ample justification for such an idea in reviewing the course of history, if we pay particular attention to the characteristics of the men we revile as "tyrants" or praise as "benefactors." Those who exert a liberating influence upon their fellows, who believe above all things in the principle of "self-determination," are the true Liberators of history. Tyrants are tyrannical to the degree that they *reject* the same principle.

With these considerations in mind, we are perhaps prepared to understand the developments of the "Golden Mean" philosophy, which many people hope will keep them away from difficulty. But Krishna intends something more than the conventional "Golden Mean" doctrine when he suggests Moderation. Moderation in the use of our faculties does not prevent us from fully entering into any action when required, although we must refrain from dissipating our "devotion" by focussing it on a *particular* aim. A simile may exist in physics: the electrical force produced by a huge generator can be grounded out on a single circuit and thus dissipated, instead of bringing light to many streets and dwellings. Similarly, the man who sets his mind on a certain result can "ground" the energies which need to be held ready for truly important action.

How easy it is for us to equate "regulation" and "discipline"—even careful moderation—with the cessation of happiness. Yet "impersonality" is necessary for perception of beauty, just as it is for truth—and happiness flows from the knowing of beauty, does it not? Do we ever feel we know the ultimates of beauty or happi-

ness when we are tangibly enmeshed in a situation, swept powerfully along by an emotion? Often when we are in solitude our perceptive faculties are able to achieve the balance which lets us fully and deeply experience. Sometimes—often—we feel our deepest love for a person, a family, or for all men, when we are not in anyone's physical presence. So discipline and happiness, restraint and beauty, meditation and love, need not be enemies, but are truly friends.

We have heard that the impartiality of the scientist is a superior quality, difficult of attainment, yet richly rewarding. To move towards the Truth, it seems, to select the most fruitful hypothesis, we must consciously strive to rid ourselves of all bias. To see clearly, we must, in other words, stand apart from the thing to be seen. And is not the impersonality of the great artist, during creation, the same thing as the impartiality of the scientist?

All men, of course, even when they are scientists or artists, live personal lives. Sometimes the price of holding an impersonal quality of mind during creative work is a bursting of all bonds of restraint when work is not in progress. At least this may have something to do with the legendary excesses of "artists." But the reactive emotional states, tending to intrude after periods of excessive discipline, are not really productive of either beauty or happiness—because they are not creative. Krishna is saying that all true creativity must invoke the Supreme Spirit—must, in other words, be dedicated to All that Lives rather than to any one specific object. "Devotion to The Supreme Spirit" *is* the impartiality of the scientist, the impersonality of the artist, and the *creative detachment* of every man who earns beauty and happiness through his depth of perception. Somewhere and somehow, Krishna implies, is to be found a state of mind which can lead "even the mere inquirer beyond the word of the Vedas." It is apparently the attitude of Meditation, for "the man of meditation, as thus described, is superior to the man of penance, and to the man of learning, and also to the man of action; wherefore, O Arjuna, resolve thou (first) to become a man of meditation." Is this but another way of saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of Heaven, and thereafter all things will be added unto you"? Certainly, in a soul-evolving universe, all of us must become "men of action," "men of learning" and even, perhaps, "men of penance." But *to prepare ourselves* we must come to know truly and clearly—

through detachment. Is such counsel an unnatural doctrine of repression? It easily can become such, so prone are we all to wish for the abrupt, oversimplified solutions which do not require us to strain over the balancing of complex subtleties. Oversimplification is "the word of the Vedas"—the word and the doctrinal aspect of every formal religion. But behind the Word is the great truth of Synthesis, the knowledge that the truly strict and the truly free are one and the same, and that the flagellant is not one step closer than the sensualist to perceiving things aright. If discipline and freedom are to be balanced in us, we may need to know more of "the doctrine of detachment." It must become apparent to honestly reflective minds that our undue involvement in emotional states is always a kind of temporary insanity which obscures not only the truth—but the worth and beauty of the very situations we find ourselves in. Yet our aim need not be to leave life—rather can it be to *truly live* life, entering into all circumstances with the greater strength and power of the man whose attitude is fixed on universal potentiality rather than upon the exploitative possibilities of the specific moment.

"Obscurations"

My friend Urban has shown me a letter from _____ in which the latter, feeling dark in consequence of various causes, sees no light. This is merely the slough of despond, I tell him . . . [and] strong souls are thus tried inevitably because they rush ahead along the road to the light. [But he] ought, as far as possible, to try to ameliorate the circumstances. He is living now, as you know, among people of an opposite faith. Around them are elementals who would, if they could, implant suspicion and distrust about those whom he reveres, or, if they fail there, will try to cause physical ills or aggravate present ones. In his case these have succeeded in part in causing darkness. . . . [He] while not just in that case, is surrounded, while not strong, by those who inwardly deplore his beliefs . . . and hence the elementals are there and they quarrel with those of _____ and bring on despair, reduce strength, and so on. . . . Those circumstances ought to be ameliorated every now and then, for I know he would at once, if changed to a better place, get better.

—Wm. Q. Judge

COMMUNICATIONS

More on "Mercy" Killing

[The following contribution is a letter sent to a newspaper, but not published. We print it without substantial alteration, for its intrinsic value and also as a sample of theosophical seed which, sown broadcast, finds here and there a ready soil.—Eds.]

THE Sander incident has stirred up a good deal of comment about euthanasia. Little of this comment involved a philosophical approach, and a philosophical consideration is the only kind that can command universal attention. The creed of one group may forbid such practise, that of another be non-committal, while a third permits it. So, to secure general consideration, it would seem to be necessary to approach the question in the light of principles having a general validity.

To start with, it should be realized that for individuals who hold to the concepts of Scientific Materialism—that man is a fortuitous aggregation of atoms, without a past as a conscious entity and without a future as a conscious entity—there is no argument except whim or convenience. This is but a logical deduction from their premises. It might be remarked that the advances in the general scientific field, but more especially in the field of psychology and even biology, have placed the scientific materialists in a somewhat precarious position.

If we ignore the above position, then the individual gains both in power and responsibility. To the extent that he has power, to that extent he is responsible. If he is responsible for a brilliant mind, creative capacity and a robust body—it would seem reasonable to assume that he is responsible for a cancer-racked body. And it does not seem wise to assist one to escape from responsibilities. Of course, some will immediately rejoin, "Then the physician should never relieve a patient suffering some illness?" I have never seen a worthwhile argument against a physician using all of his skill and knowledge to relieve a patient. But what we are considering is not the case of a physician using his knowledge and skill to relieve a patient in his illness—we are considering the case of a man depriving another of life before his natural term of experiences in this place

has ended. It does not require a physician to do this—as witness the recent news account of a man doing this for his cancer-suffering brother, with a revolver. It is well to keep in mind, also, the suffering of those who watch the patient, and what a subconscious influence this might be on one whose suffering has, for the time, rendered him incompetent to rationally judge whether or not he should request euthanasia for himself. I believe it is correct to say that nearly all of the great scriptures of mankind somewhere state that the universal arrangement is such that our load is never heavier than we can bear. Of course, one may drop to the ground and refuse to carry the load, but this does not indicate that the load is more than he can bear.

It seems reasonable to assume that one of the causes for an individual being here on earth, and functioning in this framework of "body and circumstances" is to experience, to learn. Many profound observers have concluded that we learn more from suffering than from pleasure.

Again, ignoring the materialistic conception: those who favor euthanasia are assuming that killing a suffering patient automatically places the victim in a position where he is freed from suffering. Those who remain are relieved of the agony and distress caused by seeing the person suffer, but to conclude that the one who was ejected from his body is also relieved of suffering is an assumption based on no evidence. At best, it is based on a hope.

I suppose that even those who favor euthanasia consider it wrong or folly when a highly-respected bank cashier, knowing that his peculations have been found out, resorts to suicide to escape the mental agony that would follow his ruin. If so, at just what degree of suffering does it become proper for an individual to commit suicide—by asking his relatives and doctor to kill him?

If a man is an immortal soul, having and using a body on this earth for a definite purpose, then under universal law, to deprive him of this body before its natural term, would seem to be a serious procedure. Of course, for the materialist there is nothing serious or profound about it. For him to use such terms, represents an attempt "to read meaning into a meaningless context." But how many, in respect to such a problem as "mercy" killing, are full-fledged materialists?

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Intelligent Illiterates"

The growing popularity of picture magazines among adults and of comic books among children can lead us easily into the speculation that possibly, sometime in the future, our technical skill will enable us to do away with the printed word entirely, in favor of some super *Life-Look-Peer-and-Squint* magazine with plenty of photographs and Disney-inspired drawings. There may even come a day when human beings will carry on all communications by word of mouth, via telephone, radio, television and other still undiscovered marvels of scientific ingenuity. To lend point to this speculation is the pressing problem of the many young people and children who suffer from a definite lack of reading ability, even though they have been regular attendants of recognized schools for the normal span of years, and are of average intelligence. Since the problem of intelligent illiterates is a grave and unnecessary drawback for nation and individual alike, there has been some search for the causes of the problem, with special attention to teaching methods.

"Letter Perfect"

A book published in 1948, *On Their Own in Reading*, by Wm. S. Grey of Chicago University, who is Reading Director of the Curriculum Foundation Series, provides a brief history of the evolution in methods of teaching reading, beginning with the traditional "phonic" method of instruction which held absolute sway in the field from 1900 until about 1915. The phonic method was an attack in detail on the language. As Dr. Grey describes it, and as any adult can remember for himself, the method, while thorough, was open to certain criticisms:

> Practically all of the "phonic" methods were based upon the plan of breaking down our language into various phonetic elements and then supplying drill on each of these elements by means of groups of words in which the element occurred. The reading material of primers which followed these methods consisted largely of disjointed sentences, built up of phonetically selected words as they were developed from day to day.

> In the very nature of things, reading material constructed on this artificial basis was certain to lack continuity of thought. Indeed, pages of such primers and first readers may be read almost as effectively by beginning with the last sentence and reading to the top of the page as by reading in the usual way from top to bottom.

"Proper and Sane"

On the theory that the beginner in any skill must content himself with fundamental, over-simplified motions which are boring to his mind but necessary training for other parts of his nature, the actual thought-content of a primer is often far below the living and speaking level of the child. A primer of vintage 1888 carried the cool declaration that "No part of the purpose of this early work in reading is to train the child to get thought from the printed page." From this point on, progress in teaching obviously had only one way to go—upward.

Fortunately, the challenge of actually having to decipher the printed symbols is often sufficient to engage the attention and interest of the child. What was more open to criticism than the "lack of continuity of thought" in the phonic readers was the unrelieved and mechanical drill on letters and syllables, prefixes and suffixes—all so detailed as to be almost meaningless to the child. Psychologically, such a teaching technique is not calculated to produce "the most vigorous and liberal mind, strictly trained in logical and accurate thought, and not in blind faith," and the failure to take account of the child's *thought, will, feeling, and imagination,* as well as his memory, negatives a "proper and sane system of education."

"Catch As Catch Can"

Dr. Grey describes sympathetically the revolt against this "mechanized" education, but is cognizant of the fact that the reform movement went to such extremes of opposing the old régime that it threatened to submerge its own avowed aims:

> Indeed, by 1920, such a revolt had set in against the old "phonic" readers that emphasis on visual word perception, whether by sight or by phonetic analysis, came to be considered almost disreputable among many school authorities. This trend reached fantastic extremes in many centers during the late twenties and early thirties. Radical thought in these years held that if a child were interested

at all in reading, no teaching of specific words by any method was necessary or justified. In many schools, teachers were sternly warned by their superiors against giving any special attention to the visual form of words, whether by sight or by phonetic methods, as a preparation for reading. In these schools meaning was to be considered almost the only factor in word perception, and children were expected to identify new words by "guessing" from context. Fortunately, even in the area of the articulate and vociferous radicals, many sensible teachers were not stampeded and continued to pay some attention to word-analysis skills.

A Parental Duty

"The results of the extreme viewpoints," observes Dr. Grey, "were dramatized in the thirties and early forties in certain towns and cities by groups of young people who were disinterested and inefficient in reading, by the anomaly of intelligent illiterates in high schools, and by large high-school remedial programs which attempted to correct the lack of systematic teaching in the early grades." Now, he reports, a "reawakened educational consciousness" exists as to the importance of word perception and analysis skills, but the problem is by no means solved, since during the twenty years' "revolt," teachers have had very little preparation for the teaching of word perception and especially of phonetic analysis.

It will be, probably, another decade before both teachers and pupils will be able to settle themselves in a new, balanced method of attacking the written language. In the meantime, there would seem to be more than ever an opportunity and a need for parents to re-enter *consciously* the field of formal education, supplementing the school methods and work with their own. In the absence of adequate instruction in the school, the parent has enough facilities to do this, if he is equipped with an average share of patience, and is anxious that his children do not suffer from an unnecessary disability.

Emotional Factors

That children do so suffer from these disabilities, often intensely and to the point of serious psychic and physiological imbalance, is made clear from a recent article in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association (April 15). Entitled "Reading Disabilities in Children," the article states that "there is a group of children,

estimated by Monroe to amount to about 12 per cent of all children in the United States, who fail to learn to read as well as the average of their class." These children have normal or better than normal intelligence and normal social and vocabulary development, and, for the most part, normal vision, although occasionally dyslexia is encountered. (Dyslexia is the confusion of one consonant for another, as *b* for *d*, *p* for *q*, the reversal of syllables, words or entire sentences, as in mirror writing, or a complete failure to recognize a word. This disability is associated with left-handedness, especially when attempts have been made to force the child to use the right hand.) The article continues:

> Criticism by the teacher and parents makes the child lose confidence in his ability to do school work and leads to the development of various emotional problems, with psychologic blocks which further aggravate the condition.

"THE FLASH METHOD"

The editorial remarks that it is doubtful if there is any underlying organic lesion causing this eye disability, but that, on the contrary, emotional factors such as fear, anxiety and a feeling of inferiority undoubtedly play an important role in creating these difficulties. "It is significant that many of the complexes associated with the reading disability disappear with improvement in reading." There is no difficulty in understanding that the child who has received no grounding in the basics of phonetics and the alphabet should be a prey to fear and anxiety when expected to guess the meaning of the mysterious symbols printed on the page before him. The editorial summarizes the findings of several investigators:

> Crisp and Rychener believe with Orton that the new method of teaching reading, the so-called "flash" method, is an important contributory factor in the creation of these disabilities. The "flash" method employs whole words on cards with pictorial representation to develop pure visual associations. The method was expanded into a phrase and later into a sentence method. The child on entering school immediately learns to read whole sentences. The analysis of the sentence into individual words and the analysis of individual words into phonic sounds are taught secondarily, when the child already has an extensive reading vocabulary based on visual memory rather than on synthesis of words. Berner and Berner point out that, while this method produces rapid and intelligent readers, it tests to the limit the child's power of attention and concentration.

> . . . According to Orton, among children who had been taught by the "flash" method there were three times as many cases of reading difficulties as among those who had been taught by the phonetic method. Crisp feels that emphasis on speed rather than on accuracy in the development of a new skill, such as reading, must increase the subconscious sense of defeat and conflict in a child's mind, to be followed by failure in further efforts.

It is further pointed out that important elements in the treatment of these reading disabilities are the earliest possible recognition of them and a sympathetic handling of the problem. In overcoming dyslexia, phonetics training and remedial reading are needed.

"A MIDDLE WAY"

The values of progressive education are too obvious to quarrel with, but, as with any new method, unforeseen difficulties arise and necessitate basic revisions and adaptations in the original plan. There is also the tendency in any new movement to swing to the extreme of denying any virtues at all to the old methods. These factors have been largely responsible for the mistakes made by "progressives" in the educational field in the last two decades.

What is now maturing in the higher levels of thinking on this subject—and what we may hope will eventually penetrate into every school and college—is a balancing of old and new, an intelligent and undogmatic approach to the problem of educating for freedom and for responsibility. Anyone who reads a text on modern teaching methods—Lee and Lee's *The Child and His Curriculum* (2nd edition, 1950), for instance—cannot but be favorably impressed by the emphasis given therein to the need for considering the child as a unit who has his own individual rate of growth and adaptation, and who is not to be subjected to a rigid standard of achievement based on chronological tables.

"FORMING ASSOCIATIONS"

The more mature exponents of the "new" education will now admit the necessity for some kind of discipline in learning, though the purely mechanized and more or less punitive drill of the older system is rightly in disrepute. The following extract from *The Child and His Curriculum* will serve, perhaps, to illustrate the type of constructive thinking that is possible in the new system:

> A child who misses a word in spelling and is required to write that word 100 times may or may not learn to spell the word correctly. . . . If the child did learn to spell the word, it was not through the virtue of the repetitions but rather because he gave sufficient attention and thought to the way the word was spelled so that he formed a sufficient *number* and *variety* of definite associations with the correct spelling. The next time he needed to spell that particular word, the wealth of associations made recall possible. After a sufficient number of such instances recall became automatic. *But* this tedious process of writing the word 100 times was entirely unnecessary. A few thoughtful associative repetitions of the spelling of the word were the bases of learning.
>
> . . . Whether it be concept, information, method, behavior, understandings or attitude, the greater the variety of the situations to which it may be related, the more numerous the pupils' meaningful associations with it, the more instances in which it has been applied, the greater is the learning that will take place.

Teachers with such persuasions are bound to discover how to educate the "whole child." It is, however, the parents' responsibility, ultimately, to oversee the child's development, and where disabilities show themselves, to take a "self-reliant" course in overcoming them. The theosophical parent, considering the "lighting up of Manas," will also want to discover what may be implied in the fact that a great number of people never remember not being able to read. The idea of reading as a natural and necessary human activity is sometimes lost in the shuffle of new and old "techniques of instruction." Is it not conceivable that reading may be one of the primary avenues to be opened for the child's imprisoned consciousness?

Scientific Thought in Ancient Times

"The more archaeology and philology advance," wrote H. P. Blavatsky in 1877, "the more humiliating to our pride are the discoveries which are daily made, the more glorious testimony do they bear in behalf of those who, perhaps on account of the distance of their remote antiquity, have been until now considered ignorant flounderers in the deepest mire of superstition." Because an "impenetrable veil of arcane secrecy was thrown over the sciences taught in the sanctuary," it has been assumed that the ancients were groping in the dark for knowledge now first revealed to our modern savants, and, unfortunately, popularized too readily, without discrimination.

Nothing, for instance, is so misleading as to describe Chemistry as the "Child of Alchemy." It was, in fact, the chemistry of nature (in Arabic, *Ul-Khemi*), studied under three distinct aspects—Cosmic, Terrestrial, and Human. Even more misleading is the suggestion that, while the ancients may have discovered, more by accident than design, some of the theory of Chemistry, they were lamentably deficient in the technical arts. *Isis Unveiled* was devoted to the demand that credit should be given to a spoliated past, in this as in so many other respects. Some of the results of recent scholarship in this field reinforce the arguments of H.P.B.

Technical Achievements in Antiquity

It comes as something of a shock to the historian of evolutionary hue, who is apt to view progress as travelling along a straight line from primitive to civilized culture, to observe the increasing recognition being paid to the achievements of the Babylonians and Assyrians in mathematics and astronomy, as well as in technics. The effect upon the Greeks and ancient Egyptians is obvious. In a review of *The Earliest Chemical Industry* (London, 1949) by Dr. Charles Singer (Professor Emeritus of the History of Medicine, London University), the *Times Literary Supplement* commented:

> . . . it is now clear that the technical arts of classical Greece and Rome represent somewhat inferior and rather decadent forms of the older arts of Egypt and Babylon. The historian's difficulty is the absence of records of the scientific thought current in these ancient cultures; but the existence of an Assyrian recipe for the manufacture of glass that included embryos in the mixture to be heated in the furnace strongly suggests that thought was given to the nature of such chemical changes, and the discovery of other such recipes with fine proportions, and of prescriptions with minute dosage, suggests that the Assyrian philosophers and physicians had acquired much skill in these matters, not improbably by means of experiment. (*Times Literary Supplement,* April 16, 1949.)

Alum—4,000 Years Ago

Dr. Singer's study is confined to the story of the manufacture of alum—a technical history of at least 4,000 years. It is known that—

> Alum, as a dyers' chemical, was in use about 2000 BC in Egypt; a fragment of leather of that date dyed and mordanted with alum has survived. A reference to alum occurs in the Ebers papyrus (c.

1550 BC). It was exported in quantity from Egypt. It is mentioned by Aristotle, Pliny, Seneca, Galen, and others. In the so-called "alchemical" texts of the early centuries of the Christian era, compiled by the Alexandrian Greeks, numerous references to alum are found in those that are technological, such as the Leyden and the Stockholm papyri.

Hindu and Arabic Numerals

An interesting fact mentioned in Dr. Singer's work is in connection with the dyeing industry in Italy during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D., and its indebtedness to Eastern mathematics:

> Pisa was similarly engaged in dyeing and in the importation of alum from the East, a connexion which has an interesting link with our system of numbering. In the Pisan office at Bugio, Leonardo Bonacci (c. 1170-1248), who became the great mathematician of his time, sent by his father to learn the trade, first met with the so-called Arabic numerals (really Hindu), in which the value of the digit is decimally related to its position, whereas at that time only the cumbrous system of Roman numerals was known to the West and all calculations were made with the abacus. Leonardo in his *Liber Abaci* of 1202 advocated the superiority of the new system (*Times Lit. Supp.* April 16, 1949).

These recent researches into the parallel accomplishments of ancient peoples in the field of technology may have more surprises in store for this commercial age.

Particle and Wave Theories in Antiquity

Apart from ancient sources of technological science, evidence continues to come to light about Asia's indispensable contribution to the unity of science. Mr. Joseph Needham, FRS, who lectured on this general subject at the UNESCO conference held at Beirut, Lebanon, in November, 1948, and, in October, 1949, followed this up by two broadcasts from London in the BBC programme. Theosophical students will be glad to note the following observation of Mr. Needham on the subject of particle and wave theories:

> It is needless to dwell upon the important school of Greek and Roman atomic speculations which probably had some connection with, if it was not in fact originally based upon, similar Indian speculations on atoms previous to the first century. By comparison the remarkable thing is that in Chinese thought we hardly find any traces at all of atomism. . . . It is possible that this may have

been because of the fact that what amounts to a wave conception was very deep-seated there. From about the fourth century BC onwards, Chinese theories of nature were dominated by the Yin-Yang dualism; the two forces or influences (light and dark, male and female, up and down, convex and concave, sun and moon, prince and minister) which controlled all phenomena by their regular and predictable course, alternately waxing and waning, the one being inversely proportional to the other. The earliest pre-Cartesian European graphs, which show on co-ordinates the waxing and waning of celestial bodies, would have been quite applicable to the Yin-Yang conception, and we need not yet despair of finding some similar pictorial representation in old Chinese literature. While the experimental physics of the Chinese (as distinguished from practical mechanics) was indeed one of the weakest branches of their science, nevertheless I believe there is a sense in which we may regard modern wave theory as Chinese, and modern particle theory as Graeco-Indian in origin. (*Asian Horizon,* Vol. 2, No. 3, 1949-50.)

THE UNITY OF SCIENCE—ASIA AND THE WEST

Because of the aforesaid veil of secrecy, it is too often forgotten that "The ancients knew more concerning certain sciences than our modern savants have yet discovered" (*Isis* 1, 7, 25). All the more welcome, therefore, is such testimony as that of Mr. Needham on this point. It is worth quoting in full:

It will be seen that throughout this part of the history of applied science it is rather difficult as yet to name definite priorities for Eastern or Western Asia; all we can say is that in spite of Vitruvius and others, Asia as a whole was much in advance of Europe from the earliest times until about the sixteenth century. I believe that further intensive research will greatly clarify the story of the original inventions and of their transmission. We always have to bear in mind that inventions may have been made in Central Asia, about the history of which region comparatively little is known, and spread in both directions. We speak of the unity of science, and the phrase is just. Even the most isolated discoveries, such as the invention of the mathematical zero by the Mayas and that of the wheel by the Aztecs, take their place as contributions to the scientific patrimony of mankind. But when we come to genetic relationships, there can be no doubt at all that the work of Asian peoples was at least as important in the history of science and technology as that of the Europeans, until the time of the Renaissance.

East and West

McCall's for April reports a conversation between two outstanding women of the East and the West—Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Madame Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, India's ambassador to the United States, and sister of India's prime minister, Nehru. The conversation, held in New York, began on the subject of women in politics and in international affairs, but of peculiar interest to the theosophist reader are some passages treating of the effects of imprisonment, and a revealing discussion of the widespread implications of the contrasting views of death held in the two cultures.

Mrs. Roosevelt remarked that Nehru's character combines great gentleness and great strength, and asked if these qualities might not have been strengthened by his prison experience. Madame Pandit replied:

> . . . the prison periods have undoubtedly been responsible for the tempering . . . , because you look inward; you have opportunities for reflection, time to read, time to think of your objectives and put them in relationship to your own thoughts. And I have found with each jail period that this quality of gentleness and this great strength that was developing have been combined in a more and more harmonious fashion.

"One's Own Master"

Even if all prisons allowed their inmates "time to read," and an opportunity to meditate on objectives, it is doubtful that many could derive these benefits from it. As Mrs. Roosevelt remarked in answer to Madame Pandit's appraisal of the values of confinement, "Of course to us in this country the mere thought of being restrained, not being able to go out when you want, not being able to do this and that, is such a rare thing. It seems a terrible experience. . . ."

It is obvious that here lies a great distinction in the thinking of the Indian and the American: the Indian philosopher—and many a follower of Gandhi—could never consider himself his own master unless he were able to perfectly control his mind and his emotions regardless of who controlled the mere external motions of his body. The Westerner, on the other hand, is more likely to consider freedom from external restraint as the only condition necessary for him to be "his own master," unaware of how enslaved he may be to passing impulses, unrecognized prejudices and irrational preconceptions.

"A SENSE OF SECURITY"

Mrs. Roosevelt next took occasion to remark on the statement of Nehru to the effect that no one had any fear of what might happen as a result of military action or anything of the sort. "Now that, of course, is very difficult for many of us to understand," she said, "—because it is obvious that India might be in danger of attack. . . . And that sense of security and being able to overcome the threat by peaceful methods is something I would love to understand—but I don't understand it at present." Madame Pandit suggested that one reason for this prevalent attitude might be that there is no fear of death in the average Hindu mind—

> From the time you are a little child the whole training is that life is a cycle—you are born, you grow up, you do your various duties, you die. You must die and be born again.
>
> I remember one of my early recollections—going to my grandmother's funeral. I think I must have been about eight or nine years old. And I saw that there was no crying anywhere, except my mother and possibly my uncles. I don't mean there was any rejoicing that the old lady had died. But there was no sense that one somehow associates with death.

"MINGLING WITH THE ELEMENTS"

> And then, you know, we have this custom of cremation, which I think sounds rather terrible to Western minds.
>
> But when you see this—actually it is so beautiful, this vast expanse of the Ganges, the blue sky and the peace and the scattering of the ashes, the idea being that you mingle with the elements again—it becomes less frightening.
>
> I don't mean that people didn't mourn in India or that they don't cry. Of course there is plenty of that.
>
> *Mrs. Roosevelt* Well, you mourn your own loss, but you do not mourn for the person.
>
> *Madame Pandit* That is it. . . .

Many other aspects of India's problems—the Communist infiltration, the land ownership problem, the problem of employment and industrialization, and the cottage industries—are taken up in the conversation. But, aside from specific subjects treated, the interview is a splendid example of a kind of natural propaganda which might go a long way toward promoting among peoples an understanding and sympathy for the questions facing other nations.

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